

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 649

By DeBerry L

### A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of John Robert Lee Bradley.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of John Robert Lee Bradley; and

WHEREAS, J. Robert Bradley was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities and who brought honor to his home State through his unparalleled musical talent; and

WHEREAS, a native of Memphis, Mr. Bradley was raised by his mother with little money, but very much love; at age twelve, he was invited into a National Baptist Convention Christmas Eve program when he was heard singing outside the door, an event that would shape his entire life; and

WHEREAS, the legendary gospel songwriter Lucie Campbell soon took young Mr. Bradley under her wing; as his mentor, she included him as the lead singer of her Good Will Singers, an important gospel quartet of the 1930s; and

WHEREAS, Robert Bradley went on to study classical music, learn to sing in other languages, and tour Europe and the Americas, even being knighted Sir J. Robert Bradley by the President of Liberia; throughout his travels and experiences, he never left his gospel music roots; and

WHEREAS, when Lucie Campbell died in 1963, Mr. Bradley succeeded her as Director of Music for the National Baptist Convention and worked for many years in the Nashville office of the Baptist Sunday School Publishing Board; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bradley was the first African-American to study at Tennessee Tech University; he also made history when he sang at Mahalia Jackson's funeral, a performance that

turned to pandemonium as mourners reacted to what Ms. Jackson had called the best voice she had ever heard; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bradley was a devoted member of Spruce Street Baptist Church for over sixty years; though his travels often kept him away from his beloved congregation, his return was always met with the joy and love of his fellow members there; and

WHEREAS, for many years, Mr. Bradley performed administrative functions at the National Baptist Convention, and he continued to perform vocally as late as 2005; and

WHEREAS, alongside his devotion to his faith and music, Mr. Bradley was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, J. Robert Bradley is survived by a nephew, Robert Van Bradley; a great-nephew, Robert Van Bradley, Jr.; and a great-niece, Latoyna Lowe; and

WHEREAS, in his last years, Mr. Bradley was also greatly aided by Janice Dillard, a member of his church; Chris Jackson, a minister and long-term personal aide; and Jeffrey Mobley, his personal attorney; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Bradley leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant, vocalist, and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of John Robert Lee Bradley, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character as a Christian and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Bradley.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.